

## HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

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If you see or learn of someone deliberately setting a fire, call the toll-free number—**1-800-392-1111**—or contact the conservation agent in your county and relay the necessary information. You will be given a code number and agree upon arrangements to receive a non-traceable bank draft after the arrest and conviction.



Be on guard for evidence that means you may be dealing with an arsonist. Fires at night, in remote locations and those of suspicious origin are obvious signs of arson.



Provide all the information you can, including a description of the suspect, vehicle, license number and the date, time and area where the fire occurred.



Investigations will be completed under the same guidelines as any law enforcement investigation.



The reward money comes from donations made by private citizens, interested groups and corporations. A nine-member citizen advisory board administers the reward money.



Contributions may be made to:  
Operation Forest Arson Reward Fund  
c/o Conservation Federation of Missouri  
728 West Main  
Jefferson City, MO 65101



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D I A L T O L L F R E E  
**1-800-392-1111**

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Remain Anonymous/Reward Possible



Sponsored by  
the Conservation  
Federation of  
Missouri, Missouri  
Department of  
Conservation and  
Mark Twain  
National Forest



**YOU  
CAN HELP  
PROTECT  
MISSOURI'S  
FORESTS**



# OPERATION FOREST ARSON

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**F**orest fires are a problem everywhere, but here in Missouri they are serious. The Missouri Department of Conservation reports that arsonists deliberately set 50 percent of the wildfires in the state each year, careless trash burners accidentally start 40 percent and another 10 percent start from miscellaneous causes. Wildfires damage 40,000 to 90,000 acres of our forests annually. Your local rural fire department, U.S. Forest Service and Conservation Department personnel battle an average of 7,000 wildfires each year. The cost of wildfire detection and suppression by these agencies is a

considerable burden on all taxpayers, in addition to the damage that wildfires cause to our natural resources.

Setting wildfires, for some people, is a game played to harass landowners and conservation authorities. A neighborhood feud sometimes results in a fire. A few people out for a good time and a little excitement often set fires “just for the fun of it.”

Arsonists are of the same mold as those who vandalize road signs, shoot livestock and wildlife from the road and destroy public-use facilities. Citizen cooperation with all law enforcement agencies is essential. Arsonists must know that Missourians will not tolerate these activities. In some areas, arsonists set fires at any time of the day or night without fear of prosecution. Until they can't trust anyone to remain silent, arsonists' activities will continue.

Putting hard-core arsonists out of business is the intent of **Operation Forest Arson**. This program provides a reliable method for citizens to

call, report an arson violation and collect a reward. **Operation Forest Arson** not only provides a statewide toll-free hotline, reward incentives and instructions on recognizing and reporting arsonists, but also allows the informant to remain anonymous. The Conservation Federation's Forestry Committee, who pays the rewards, will not even know the informant. Retaliation by the arsonist is, therefore, eliminated.

Rewards range from \$200 to \$1,000 for the arrest and conviction of an arsonist. A minimum reward of \$100 will be paid for information helpful in apprehending or identifying a violator. A reward of \$1,000 may be paid for information about major violations and known repeat offenders.

The Forestry Committee of the Conservation Federation of Missouri initiated Operation Forest Arson—a cooperative effort among the Conservation Department, Mark Twain National Forest and Conservation Federation—to stop the senseless burning of our forests.

